

REMARKS

The purpose of this Preliminary Amendment is to eliminate multiple dependent claims in order to avoid the additional fee. Applicants reserve the right to reintroduce claims to canceled combined subject matter.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached pages are captioned "**Version With Markings to Show Changes Made**".

Respectfully submitted,



I. William Millen, Reg. No. 19,544
Attorney for Applicants
MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C.
Arlington Courthouse Plaza 1
2200 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1400
Arlington, VA 22201
Direct Dial: 703-812-5325
Facsimile: 703-243-6410
Email: millen@mwzb.com

IWM:jmm

FILED: 21 SEPTEMBER 2001

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claims 3-4 and 7-13 have been amended as follows:

3. (Amended) Process according to ~~either of the preceding c~~Claims 1, in which the polymerization of the lactam is carried out in the presence of one or more polymers (A) which are introduced either into the solution (a) or into the mixing device in step (b) or into the molten lactam which is added in addition to that originating from (a) or according to any combination of these possibilities.
4. (Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the preceding c~~Claims 1, in which the polymerization of the lactam is carried out in the presence of one or more fillers which are introduced either into the solution (a) or into the mixing device in step (b) or into the molten lactam which is added in addition to that originating from (a) or according to any combination of these possibilities.
7. (Amended) Process according to Claim ~~5 or 6~~, in which the polymerization of the lactam is carried out in the presence of one or more polymers (A) which are introduced either into the solution from step (a) or into the mould or into the molten lactam which is added in addition to that originating from (a) or alternatively during the in-line mixing of the lactam originating from (a) and of the lactam added in addition to that originating from (a) or a combination of all these possibilities.
8. (Amended) Process according to ~~any one of Claims 5 to 7~~, in which the polymerization of the lactam is carried out in the presence of one or more fillers which are introduced either into the solution from step (a) or into the mould or into the molten lactam which is added in addition to that originating from step (a) or alternatively during the in-line mixing of the lactam originating from (a) and of the lactam added in addition to that originating from (a) or a combination of all these possibilities.
9. (Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the preceding c~~Claims 5, in which the catalyst is chosen from sodium, potassium, alkali metal hydrides and hydroxides, and alkali metal alkoxides such as sodium methoxide or ethoxide.
10. (Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the preceding c~~Claims 5, in which the regulator is chosen from acetanilide, benzanilide, N-methylacetamide, N-ethylacetamide, N-methylformamide, (4-ethoxyphenyl)-acetamide and alkylenebisamides such as ethylenebis-stearamide (EBS) and ethylenebisoleamide.

11. (Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the preceding c~~Claims 5, in which the ratio of the catalyst to the regulator, in moles, is between 0.5 and 2 and preferably between 0.8 and 1.2; the number of moles of regulator being expressed as the number of moles of amide groups.

12. (Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the preceding c~~Claims 5, in which the proportion of catalyst in the lactam in step (b1) is between 0.1 mol and 5 mol per 100 mol of lactam and preferably between 0.3 and 1.5.

13. (Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the preceding c~~Claims 5, in which the lactam is lauryllactam, the temperature of step (a) is between 155 and 180°C and preferably between 160 and 170°C, and the temperature of step (b) or (b1) is between 200 and 350°C and preferably between 230 and 300°C: